



Reverend Alan Smith
United Methodist
Church of the Good Shepherd
1500 Quentin Road,
Lebanon, PA 17042
717-272-7741 www.umcogs.org

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP †
Celebration of Faith



Advent Babies: Baby John: The Joy of God

December 13, 2020

Third Sunday in Advent

11:00 A.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor/Reader 1: Today we light the third Advent candle, the pink candle. We have chosen to think about another word that Christmas brings to mind. We pause for joy.

Liturgist/Reader 2: (reads Matthew 2:7-11)

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were

overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Pastor/Reader 1:

Christ came to bring joy. Matthew tells us the story of the wisemen from the East who saw a mysterious star that beckoned them to follow as it moved across the sky. In time, the astrologers found themselves in Bethlehem. And when the star seemed to stop over the manger, "they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy." Then they found Mary and the child and were so moved that they "fell down and worshiped him." Then they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Liturgist/Reader 2:

How different the wise men were from the dark-minded King Herod. When Herod heard about the birth of the unusual baby, he became unhinged. Thinking that the child might indeed grow up to be a king and therefore be an eventual threat to his power, "he was troubled." So troubled, in fact, that he sent his soldiers to Bethlehem to kill all of the boys 2 years and younger. Fortunately, Joseph and Mary were able to flee to Egypt.

Pastor/Reader 1:

Herod missed Christmas altogether. Hardhearted persons always do. Mean-spirited people are, by their very nature, condemned to lives of desperation. They see threats everywhere, and joy escapes them. How different it is for persons like the wise men. They are open to the light. They discover hope. They believe that God has dealings with earth's inhabitants, and when they find a hint of it, such as the birth of a beautiful child, they rejoice with exceeding great joy. Such persons come to realize the truth of John's words: "To all who received him (meaning God's gift of Christ), he gave power to become children of God" (John 1:12). What a great and joyous Christmas gift that is!

Liturgist/Reader 2: (lights candle, then...) Let us join in singing another verse of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. (Note: Vs. 6 of #211)

ALL:

**O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thy justice here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Let us pray:

We remember, our Father, that among the many gifts Christ offered us, we find "the good news of great joy." Joy in its fullness. We are profoundly grateful that Christ's joy cannot be taken from us but is eternal. In his name. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Is there any joy to be found in our world today?

People: God is inviting us to joy in times like these.

Leader: Where can we find this joy?

People: We come to God to learn how to live joy in the midst of a world that is broken.

All: Show us, oh God, the joy embedded in Your plan for us and for the world.

Opening Hymn

There's a Song in the Air

Opening Prayer

written by Joanna Harader, posted on Spacious Faith

Holy God of Joy,

We rejoice in the reality of who you are.

We live with the joy of your love for us.

Our contentment comes and goes.

Our happiness ebbs and flows.

Our feelings depend upon our circumstances,

Our physical health, our brain chemistry.

But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children.

And we give you thanks. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: *Luke 1: 5-17*

Liturgist: The Word of God for God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Canticle of Mary

DOXOLOGY

(Tune: While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks vs 6)

All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;

good will henceforth from heaven to earth,

begin and never cease, begin and never cease.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I Do Believe

by Bruce Prewer

**I believe in God whose light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never smother it.**

**I believe that on a night in Bethlehem there was born a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord.**

**I believe in the Word who has become incarnate,
our very flesh and blood, yet full of grace and truth.**

**I believe in the blessed appearing of the salvation of our God,
that is for the happiness of all people.**

**I believe in his name as Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of peace;**

**Of the increase of his rule and of his unique peace,
there will be no end.**

The zeal of the God of hosts will do this.

This I surely believe!

MESSAGE

“Baby John: Jump for Joy”

Pastor Alan Smith

SPOKEN HYMN

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(2nd Prayer of Confession by Rev. Jan Brooks) by Geoff

O Holy God of Promise, we so often place our trust in the things we can see, and touch, and easily believe.

But you did not ask us to believe what is easy, you have asked us to believe what is true!

Forgive us, Holy One, when we doubt the ways you work.

Forgive us we question how you chose to enter the world, born as one of us.

Forgive our lack of faith and belief in ways which seem so impossible to believe.

Help us to look in faith, open our belief, and set aside our doubts that you sent your Son,

born of a virgin – the one who has come to set us all free.

We offer these prayers in the name of your Son, Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

INVITATION TO PRAY

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

HYMN:

Joy to the World

COMMISSION and BENECTION

by Bruce Prewer (Geoff)

Liturgist: With joy may you draw water from the wells of salvation.

People: Amen!

Liturgist: The health of the living God is among you and within you.

Go out into the world buoyantly and boldly.

People: Thanks be to God!

Liturgist: The laughter of the saving Christ, the cheerfulness of the lively Spirit, and the joy of the everlasting God, be with you now and always.

People: Amen !

POSTLUDE

Iob sei dem allmachigen Gott

SERMON OUTLINE:

"I Believe in God: Ode to Joy"

Baby John: Jump with Joy

Luke 1: 5-17, 46-55

Joy is contagious

Happiness transforms into joy when embraced and embedded by faith in the plans of God.

True joy shines NOT in spite of difficulties, but illuminated BY the difficulties.

Joy rises above the ashes of the past and even the present as it celebrates the movement of God within.

Advent season challenges us to a faith that gives birth to joy in the midst of sadness, fear, the unfamiliar, the unanticipated, the disappointing, the uncontrollable, the feelings of loss, the unforeseen, the surprising...

Some of our lessons of Advent:

The first: joy of the Lord still sings and worships in the midst of hardship, oppression, hatred, abuse... Joy lights the way THROUGH these things and refuses to allow them to steal the joy FROM them.

By faith, we don't choose for hope OR peace OR joy OR love – they come together wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

The second thing we learn is to not deny its welcome and presence, no matter our surroundings.

...My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God... Those are decisive words not lamenting delusions.

Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" has original words that spoke of unity and justice. Imagine the impact that the 9th Symphony has had.

- At Tiananmen Square in 1989
- In Chile
- As the Berlin Wall came down
- In Japan each December

Calendar for Week of 12/13/20

SUNDAY

8:30 - Drive In Worship [Parking Lot]

9:45 - Contemporary live stream/web

9:45 - Sunday School [zoom]

11:00 - Traditional Worship [web]

6-8 - Youth Night [zoom]

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

7:00 am - Prayer & Sacrament

2:00 - Small Group [zoom]

7:00 pm—Celebrate Recovery

(contact Jason jgillhoolley@gmail.com

or Andrea agillhoolley717@gmail.com)

THURSDAY

12:30-4—Prayer Ministry

5:00 - Contemporary Worship Design Team

5:30 - Traditional Worship Design Team

6:30-8:30 - Young Adult Group [zoom]

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

7:00—Men's sm grp

9:00 - Contemporary Worship Rehearsal

6:00 - Drive In Worship [Parking Lot]

SUNDAY

8:30 - Drive In Worship [Parking Lot]

9:45 - Contemporary [www.umcogs.org]

9:30 - Sunday School [zoom]

11:00 - Traditional Worship [www.umcogs.org]

6-8 - Youth Night [zoom]

Mission Statement for the Church of the Good Shepherd

We are committed to:

Connecting persons to Jesus Christ

Connecting with broken and hurting people

Challenging persons to grow and celebrate their relationship with Jesus Christ

Equipping persons and partnering with them to serve in God-powered ministry